



It is often difficult for people to stop drinking when they enter treatment. Some reasons for this follow.

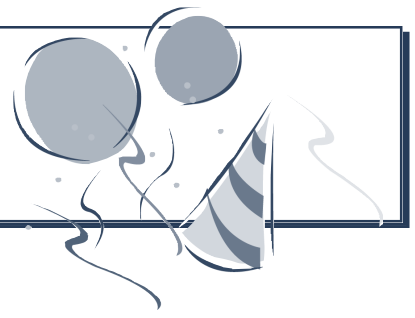
Triggers for alcohol use are everywhere. It is sometimes hard to do anything social without facing people who are drinking. **How can you get together with your friends without drinking?**

Many people use alcohol in response to internal triggers. Depression and anxiety seem to go away when they have a drink. It's difficult for people to realize that sometimes the alcohol causes the depression. **What moods and feelings make you want to have a drink?**

If a person is dependent on an illicit drug and uses alcohol less often, alcohol may not be viewed as a problem until the person tries to stop drinking. **What challenges have you faced in stopping drinking since you entered treatment?**

Alcohol affects the rational, thinking part of the brain. It is difficult to think reasonably about a substance that makes thinking clearly more difficult. **How does it feel to be sober at a party and watch people drink and act stupidly?**

Alcohol dulls the rational brain. Alcohol lowers people's inhibitions and can make people more sexually aggressive, less self-conscious, and more sociable. People who use alcohol to decrease inhibitions and help them socialize may feel uncomfortable without it. **In what ways have you depended on alcohol? For sexual or social reasons?**



Many of us grow up using alcohol to mark special occasions.

It is hard to learn how to celebrate those times without drinking. **What special occasions did your family celebrate with alcohol?**

How do you celebrate now?

In many families and social groups, drinking is a sign of strength or maturity. Drinking often is seen as a way of being “one of the gang.” **Do you feel less “with it” when you are not drinking? If so, in what ways?**

Drinking can become linked to certain activities. It can seem difficult during early recovery to do those things without a beer or other drink (for example, eating certain kinds of foods, going to sporting events). **What activities seem to go with drinking for you?**

It is important to remember that everyone who stops drinking has these problems at first. As you work through the difficult situations and spend more time sober, it does get easier.

